

Indian Doves Seen Feeding on Beach at Mandurah.—The feral Domestic Pigeon (*Columba livia*) is commonly seen feeding on oceanic beaches but I had never seen either of the introduced Turtledoves (*Streptopelia*) doing likewise until I observed five Indian Doves (*Streptopelia chinensis*) feeding on the sand-flat adjacent to the beach at Mandurah, between the western groyne and Mary St., Leighton Park, on July 28, 1968.

One week later, on August 4, 1968 I examined the exact spot where the doves had been feeding and collected sample material of the two plants growing there. These plants were identified by Mr. Eric Lindgren as the Sea Rocket (*Cakile maritima*) and the Strand Daisy (*Arctotheca nerea*) and both were flowering and seeding. The nature of the Sea Rockets' seed pod makes it unlikely that the doves could have obtained seed from it and Mr. Lindgren informs me that the Strand Daisy produces seed throughout the year and this seed forms part of the diet of the Rock Parrot (*Neophema petrophila*). Consequently it could be assumed that the doves were feeding on seeds of the Strand Daisy.

This is further confirmed by the flushing of a *Streptopelia* from a small coastal sand-flat some 10 miles south of Mandurah by Miss Maxine Renfrey and myself in the afternoon of August 4, 1968. I thought the bird was a Senegal Dove (*Streptopelia senegalensis*) but identification was not positive. Examination of the area from which the *Streptopelia* was flushed revealed that the sand-flat was covered by only one species of plant, the Strand Daisy, many of which were in flower.

I have also observed the Indian Dove feeding around Winter Grass (*Poa annua*) on the lawn of my West Perth residence when the Winter Grass was dropping seed. The grass was kindly identified by Mrs. Alma de Rebiera.

—R. H. STRANGER, West Perth.

Black-breasted Buzzard in the Jarrah Belt.—A large-winged hawk flew directly over Karragullen School on the morning of November 22, 1968. The bird, a Black-breasted Buzzard, *Hamirostra melanosternon*, flew with a lazy, slightly ungainly glide, occasionally flapping its wings. The circular, white, "R.A.A.F." markings under the wings were exceptionally clear, even as the bird soared and disappeared to the west. The children viewing with me remarked on the strongly defined 'fingers' of the dark primary wing feathers. The small bat-like tail was also in evidence. Except for the dark wing-tips, the bird was generally light grey-brown, so would presumably have been a light phase bird.

—ROGER SMITH, Government School, Karragullen.

A Nesting Record of the Painted Finch, *Zonaequithus pictus* on Mount Hale, Murchison District—Serventy and Whittell (*Birds of Western Australia*, 4th edition, 1967.) give the southern limits of the distribution of this species as Boolathanna Station and the Barlee Range.

On September 26, 1968 we climbed Mount Hale, a mountain approximately 2,400 feet above sea level, standing on the north-west corner of Mount Hale Station, Meekatharra (26°03'S, 117°15'E). The slopes of the mountain are covered with large fragmented boulders of schist and quartzite of older Archaean age (whitestone series), and vegetated with sparse shrubs of *Acacia*, *Cassia* and *Eremophila*. There are few herbs and grasses. At the summit there is a small area, perhaps one acre in extent, on which

spinifex, *Plectrachne melvillei*, is the dominant plant. Spinifex does not appear to occur anywhere on the surrounding plain within one hundred miles of Mount Hale, although this observation suggests that it may be present at the top of neighbouring hills, for example Mount Matthew and Mount Gould. A Painted Finch was flushed from its nest containing 5 eggs in this small patch of spinifex. The nest was made of spinifex, without an entrance tunnel but with a 'verandah' of spinifex straws that protruded about two inches above and beyond the nest cup. It was set in the side of a spinifex tussock about twelve inches above the ground and was within twenty feet of the summit. The species has not been seen by us on Mileura Station, adjacent and to the south of Mt. Hale, although continual observations have been recorded there since 1959. In 1968 the weather in the area was characterised by good, but not exceptional, summer and winter rains, a relatively cold winter and cool spring. Mount Hale is approximately 170 miles SSE of the Barlee Range.

—S.J.J.F. DAVIES and M.W.R. BECK,
C.S.I.R.O., Clayton Road, Helena Valley, W.A.

Records of Beach-drifted Sea-birds, April 1968.—On a visit to Western Australia I made the following observations on visiting southern sea-birds on local beaches:

Wilson Storm-Petrel, *Oceanites Oceanicus*. I found one washed up on Scarborough Beach on April 15, after gale force winds. Although not uncommon off-shore specimens are not often found washed ashore. This specimen was $7\frac{1}{2}$ in. in length and had a wing-span of $15\frac{1}{2}$ in.

Yellow-nosed Albatross, *Diomedea chlororhynchus*. Found at Scarborough on the same day. The remains consisted of a clean-picked body skeleton with wings attached, but minus the head and legs. Identification was from the under-wing pattern.

Dove-Prion, *Pachyptila desolata*. On April 25 I found a live bird at Yallingup Beach. It was seemingly unharmed but was opening and closing its bill, with the wings outspread. It died shortly after discovery. Measurements: length, 295 mm.; wing, 190 mm.; wingspan, 620 mm.; culmen, 27 mm.; width, 14 mm.; tarsus, 33 mm.

L. J. F. McHUGH, Roseville, N.S.W.